WHAT IS CLAIMED IS

1. An image processing apparatus comprising:

a decompressing unit to decompress image data having a first data compression format;

an obtaining unit to obtain a second data compression format that is applicable for decompression by another image processing apparatus;

a re-compressing unit to re-compress the decompressed image data with the second data compression format obtained by the obtaining unit; and

a transmitting unit to transmit the re-compressed image data to the other image processing apparatus.

2. The image processing apparatus as claimed in claim 1, further comprising a memory unit to store the image data having the first data compression format.

3. The image processing apparatus as claimed in claim 1, further comprising a request receiving unit to receive a request from the other image processing apparatus requesting for the image data having the first data compression format.

4. The image processing apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein the first data compression format is a JPEG 2000 format.

5. The image processing apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein the image processing apparatus and the other image processing apparatus are connected via a network.

6. The image processing apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein the decompressing unit can selectively decompress a part of the image data having the first data compression format.

7. The image processing apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein the re-compression of the decompressed image data is performed with a lossless compression scheme.

8. The image processing apparatus as claimed in claim 7, wherein the lossless compression scheme is an LZH scheme.

9. The image processing apparatus as claimed in claim 7, wherein the lossless compression scheme is a JPEG/DPCM scheme.

10. The image processing apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein the re-compression of the decompressed image data is performed with a lossy compression scheme.

11. The image processing apparatus as claimed in claim 10, wherein the lossy compression scheme is a JPEG/DCT scheme.

12. The image processing apparatus as claimed in claim 10, wherein the lossy compression scheme is a GIF scheme.

13. The image processing apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein the re-compressing unit switches between lossless compression and lossy compression according to a prescribed condition.

14. A data decompression method comprising:

a) decompressing image data having a first data compression format;

b) obtaining a second data compression format that is applicable for decompression by another image processing apparatus;

c) re-compressing the decompressed image data with the second data compression format obtained in b); and

d) transmitting the re-compressed image data to the other image processing apparatus.

15. The data decompression method as claimed in claim 14, further comprising storing the image data having the first data compression format.

16. The data decompression method as claimed in claim 14, further comprising receiving a request from the other image processing apparatus requesting for the image data having the first data compression format.

17. The data decompression method as claimed in claim 14, wherein the first data compression format is a JPEG 2000 format.

18. The data decompression method as claimed in claim 14, wherein the image processing apparatus and the other image processing apparatus are connected via a network.

19. An article of manufacture having one or more recordable media storage instructions thereon which, when executed by a computer having an image processing apparatus, where the image processing apparatus is in communication with another image processing apparatus, causes the computer to perform a method comprising:

decompressing image data having a first data compression format;

obtaining a second data compression format that is applicable for decompression by the other image processing apparatus;

re-compressing the decompressed image data with the second data compression format; and

transmitting the re-compressed image data to the other image processing apparatus.

20. The article of manufacture as claimed in claim 19, where the method further comprises storing the image data having the first data compression format.

21. The article of manufacture as claimed in claim 19, where the method further comprises receiving a request from the other image processing apparatus requesting for the image data having the first data compression format.

22. The article of manufacture as claimed in claim 19, wherein the first data compression format is a JPEG 2000 format.

23. The article of manufacture as claimed in claim 19, wherein the image processing apparatus and the other image processing apparatus are connected via a network.

24. The article of manufacture as claimed in claim 19, wherein decompressing image data comprises selectively decompressing a part of the image data having the first data compression format.

25. The article of manufacture as claimed in claim 19, wherein re-compressing the decompressed image data is performed with a lossless compression scheme.

26. The article of manufacture as claimed in claim 25, wherein the lossless compression scheme is an LZH scheme.

27. The article of manufacture as claimed in claim 25, wherein the lossless compression scheme is a JPEG/DPCM scheme.

28. The article of manufacture as claimed in claim 19, wherein the re-compression of the decompressed image data is performed with a lossy compression scheme.

29. The article of manufacture as claimed in claim 28, wherein the lossy compression scheme is a JPEG/DCT scheme.

30. The article of manufacture as claimed in claim 28, wherein the lossy compression scheme is a GIF scheme.

31. The article of manufacture as claimed in claim 19, wherein the re-compressing function switches between lossless compression and lossy compression according to a prescribed condition.